

Upper Mississippi River - Illinois Waterway System Navigation Study – Collaboration

In August 2001, the Corps of Engineers restarted the navigation study of the Upper Mississippi River and Illinois Waterway, re-directing this study in line with recommendations made by the National Academy of Sciences (NAS). The restructured study looks at the complicated inter-relationships between the environment, navigation system and floodplain. It is focused on ensuring that the waterway system will continue to be a nationally treasured ecological resource as well as an effective transportation system. It will seek ways to reduce lock congestion, achieve an environmentally sustainable system, and address ecosystem and floodplain management needs related to navigation. The foundation of the study is collaboration among Federal and State agencies, non-governmental organizations and the general public. In mid-March the study team held a series of six public meetings at various locations within the study area to provide an update on the study and receive public reaction to its new direction. Coordination and consultation with independent experts, including the National Research Council and the Chief of Engineers Environmental Advisory Board, is another important aspect of the study. This collaborative process will continue as the study moves forward. The first product of the restructured study will be an interim report in July 2002. For additional Information, visit www.ursbethesda.com/umr-iwwsns.